

Although the examples 6a, 6b exhibit the larger ratio of optical power which propagates through a jacket region to the total optical power propagating through said optical fiber [propagating power] (P_{jacket}/P) than the example 6, the examples 6a, 6b exhibit the smaller ratio of optical power which propagates through a jacket region to the total optical power propagating through said optical fiber [propagating power] (P_{jacket}/P) than the comparison example 3. That is, the examples 6a, 6b can simultaneously achieve the large chromatic dispersion to negative, the large chromatic dispersion slope to negative, the large effective core area and the small bending loss compared with the comparison example 3.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 8, 9 and 10 as follows. A clean version of the amended claims is attached hereto.

1. (Amended) An optical fiber including a core region and cladding regions of not less than three layers which surround said core region in order, wherein each of said cladding regions has a mean refractive index different from those of the adjacent regions, at least one of said cladding regions has a lower mean refractive index than both adjacent cladding regions, and at least one cladding region is provided with a plurality of sub medium regions each having a refractive index lower than a main medium constituting this cladding region.

8. (Amended) An optical fiber according to claim 5, wherein the ratio of the optical power which propagates through said sub mediums of said outer cladding region